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ABSTRACT

Experimental programs to be initiated in 12 model districts will attempt, through the humanities and arts, to help elementary and high school students relate to the world with a new sense of excitement, concern, and reverence. Model projects will utilize team teaching, interdisciplinary and multimedia techniques, and independent study programs. Planned are youth speak-out forums; environmental centers for the arts; and ties with business, scientific, and cultural institutions in the community (thus allowing students to spend a portion of every school week in outside exploration). These innovative projects, carefully evaluated by students and staff alike, will hopefully open up new opportunities for students to examine alternative value and behavior commitments, toward realizing a richer personal life and societal fulfillment. (Characteristics of the humanities and arts program (K-12) and examples of similar programs are provided.) (MF)

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HUMANITIES and ARTS in ELEMENTARY and SECONDARY EDUCATION

A Statement of Policy
and Proposed Action
by the
REGENTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF THE
STATE OF NEW YORK

THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Albany
March 1970

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FOREWORD

We must strive to make the teaching and learning process more humanistic. By this we mean to stress education which emphasizes the importance of man, his nature and place in the universe; teaches that all persons have dignity and worth; studies man's accomplishments, especially those that tend to enrich the quality of life; and searches for the means to repair our savaged environment, to satisfy one's emotions and aspirations, and to develop a personal lifestyle. We need to increase humanistic concern in order to redress the value imbalances of a technological and material-oriented society.

In this statement, the sixth of a series of position papers, the Regents present a broad comment on the special need for a new humanistic emphasis in the schools. The paper outlines a specific proposal for demonstration of new programs in the humanities and arts in elementary and secondary education.

We hope that all persons will review this brief statement. The proposal for demonstration projects is included in the Executive Budget of the Governor, and we urge especially that the members of the Legislature approve the proposal at the 1970 session.

Ewald B. Nyquist
Commissioner of Education

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HUMANITIES AND ARTS IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Towards a New Humanistic Emphasis in Our Schools

INTRODUCTION

The Regents are deeply and increasingly concerned that more emphasis be placed by the schools of the State on those aspects of learning and of human experiences that promote a sense of community and that give life ultimate meaning and delight.

The mounting evidences of fractionated, alienated, and "turned off" young people must not be ignored. Our schools have been so busy transmitting knowledge, developing skills, meeting college entrance requirements and preparing youth for making a living, that they have often neglected questions of how to fashion a life worth living. Too many of our younger generation are becoming joyless strangers.

The Regents are convinced that many of the ills of society stem from the value rootlessness and the boredom associated with contemporary life.

We believe that a special opportunity exists in the humanities and the arts to provide the leadership needed for a true educational renaissance in our school system. We believe especially that literature, drama, music, the dance, and the visual arts can help young people to relate to one another, and to the universe, with a new sense of excitement, concern, and reverence.

We believe there is profound wisdom in President Nixon's words that "... the arts have the rare capacity to help heal divisions among our own people and to vault some of the barriers that divide the world."

We believe that the humanities and the arts can raise insistent questions about science, about technology, about economics, about government that these other fields of knowledge and experience can and must answer in the interest of man's survival and man's dreams for himself and his progeny.

As Glenn T. Seaborg, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, recently said, "We have always experienced times when we have been dissatisfied, unhappy with ourselves and our conditions and lamented them profoundly before we took new steps to change them.

"Man's growth in such eras seemed to have a momentum that carried it beyond the value of the times, and then, in conflict with ourselves and our surroundings, we had to sit back and rethink these values, reconsider our activities in terms of the quality of our lives and the directions they were taking. The instruments of this self-examination are the humanities."

We believe that schools should enlarge their emphasis on the study of the alternative value commitments open to man and the differences that his choices make in the quality of societal life and the survival of society . . . that students should learn the process of valuing — of discovering alternatives in a situation; analyzing effects of each alternative if adopted; discussing these effects with peers; choosing; then publicly affirming one's choice and incorporating the choices into behavior.

We believe that the curriculum can and must be examined with an eye toward turning students "on" — enabling them to seek realistic solutions to problems of hunger, race, poverty, war, and environment, in their search for a better order.

In order to enlarge emphasis on the humanities and the arts in the elementary and secondary schools, the Regents propose the following program to restructure this area of the curriculum, for we cannot legitimately expect a marked improvement in the quality of human life unless we can begin to change the organization and spirit of American education.

PROGRAM

Project SEARCH (Search for Education through the Arts, Related Content, and the Humanities)

One of the Regents' top priorities is to develop an effective process to assist local school districts in redesigning their curriculums. We are ready to utilize the humanities and the arts to demonstrate an increased emphasis on the study of individual and social values, and on developing each individual's creative capacity. Projects will attempt to channel widespread student unrest and alienation into a search for individual self-control and positive social change. New team teaching arrangements will be developed in the districts, and inter-disciplinary service will be provided for the districts by State Education Department teams. The Department is prepared to work with twelve districts in the next year. Our request for this program in Fiscal Year 1970–71 is $1.5 million.

Model Districts. It is proposed that twelve Model Districts be established, each of which will provide a total curricular, adminis-

trative, and financial commitment to a humanistic emphasis, and to the necessary staffing, institutional and scheduling recommendations for such a program in the 1970's.

The pilot situations will include a cross section of representative schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas; consortiums involving Boards of Cooperative Educational Services, regional centers, colleges and other public institutions such as museums and learned societies, business, and industry. It will link together the humanities and arts, using art, the individual's creative comment on the human condition, as man's unique contribution to the humanities. Each child's education will be built around: continuing search and work, analysis and application of knowledge, and the joy of rich experience. The program will be designed to raise levels of aspiration and achievement and to foster planned social action to insure the responsiveness of institutions to human needs.

Example of a Model Project. Each Model District will create its own program in terms of the State and local guidelines to be developed. Therefore, the following description serves only as an example of some of the elements which might characterize a demonstration program.

The student will examine alternative values open to man. He will analyze the different social conditions which result from past and present choices of such alternatives.

Each student will spend a portion of every week outside the confines of the school building. He will pursue his individual program of study in an appropriate business or industrial concern in the community, in scientific or cultural institutions, or in such other related agencies as a local newspaper, for purposes of research or journalistic effort. These community institutions, through joint planning with the schools, will provide resources, possible staff, space, and/or programs. This will greatly expand the scope of vitality of the student's field of exploration. It will broaden and enrich his educational resources. And it will draw community institutions and the people involved in them directly into a responsible role in the education of youth.

Each student will need to use a variety of materials to fully explore and compare man's ideas, achievements, and expression. Such materials, beyond the currently emphasized single textbook, would include a great breadth of literary, visual, and arts media, such as paperback and hard-covered books, television, slides, live performances, films, filmstrips, newspapers, tape recordings, displays, and models, frequently in multimedia combinations. The student will use such media

and also create his own visual and auditory expressions to illustrate and demonstrate his developing knowledge, ideas, and attitudes.

A large portion of each student's time will be spent in independent study, either in school or in the supporting community institutions. Tutorial sessions will be held to insure essential skill development. Students and teachers will conduct small discussion groups and large group demonstrations. Thus, grouping and scheduling will be flexible.

Students will build their studies around the exploration of important concepts such as freedom, brotherhood, courage, justice, or such factors of protest as violence and alienation. They will seek examples and make comparisons and contrasts in the natural and social sciences as well as in literature and the other arts. They will examine works created by man in the Western and non-Western cultures, through the ages. The process is one of inquiry and search, not of memorization of prescribed bodies of knowledge. Parents, other laymen, and students will be directly involved in the development of the model programs.

Students and adults in the community will share an Environmental Center. Here they will find an opportunity for self-expression and the building of sensitivity and perception — a phase of development which has been greatly neglected in today's technological world — through the media of the visual arts, music, creative writing, and the performing arts. Youth will sharpen their senses through the use of light, sound, color, form, and motion, satisfying today's strongly expressed quest to " feel " as well as to " think " and preparing for the extensive amounts of leisure time that will confront our population as the predicted decrease in working hours develops.

Each student will take an active part in the evaluation of his educational program through oral comments, taped discussions, continuing suggestions for improvement, response inventories, and new evaluation forms which the students themselves will help to devise.

Youth " Speak-Out Forums." An important component of the program will be statewide network of Youth Forums. These forums will be planned and carried out by students who will also write discussion guides for statewide use. The forums will be projected through a national television network, regional educational and/or commercial television programs and local discussion groups. The purpose will be to create dialogue among youth and between youth and adults, forming a channel through which young people can constructively affect the educational system with their ideas and recommendations.

Education Department Task Forces. Several instructional task forces will be developed within the State Education Department, composed of teams comparable to the teacher teams in the Model Districts. The Department Task Forces will draw together the resources of its specialists from a variety of disciplines to serve as consultants to the Model Districts.

State Guidelines. During the summer of 1970, a work group, drawn from the Model Districts and the Education Department Task Forces, will design guidelines for the development of the model programs. Professional staff members from the Model Districts will also design their own plans during the summer of 1970. Provision will be made for continuing contact between the State Planning Committee and the planning representatives of the districts. These planning groups and the Model Districts will serve as pilots in the Department's forthcoming program of public involvement and redesign of schools for the 1970's.

Professional Staff Training. Staff training in the Model Districts will consist of organized inservice education programs devoted to planning the new curriculums. Through such planning, teachers, administrators, students, and members of the community will learn to reshape the curriculum and to relate their special disciplines to the problems to be explored. Consultants will become part of the continuing inservice education program, building increased teacher sensitivity to the largely neglected educational needs of youth — the need for self-respect or self-image, the development of sensitivities, values, self-expression, and choice-making through a balanced application of factual knowledge and emotion.

Experimentation in Teacher Preparation. At the same time, an effort will be made to experiment with changes in teacher training institutions to prepare teachers for humanities-oriented programs. An internship program could be established to provide large numbers of teachers-in-training with first hand practical experience in the Model Districts.

The Environmental Center. A demonstration "Environmental Center" will be established in the State Education Department. Science laboratories and language laboratories are used to help students learn in the fields of science and foreign languages. The Environmental Center will provide students and adults with the opportunity to have visual, auditory, haptic, and kinesthetic experiences, using the forces of light, sound, color, form, and motion. The Center will serve as a means for self-expression and the exploration of life values. It will be open for the use of all residents of the State and will have the equipment, facilities, supplies, and personnel necessary

to make it a vital experience through the media of the visual arts, music, creative writing, and the performing arts. Artists-in-residence will be available in the Environmental Center for consultation and demonstrations. Many of the successful techniques and skills developed will be useful to the Model Districts and schools of the State in the development of regional Environmental Centers.

Evaluation. The program will provide for conditions evaluation in the twelve model districts. The following are examples of the kinds of behavioral growth that the Model Network aims to achieve and demonstrate. Evaluation tools capable of assessing these growth patterns will be developed.

The student's ability to:

- — clarify the attitudes and values which guide his behavior
- — seek information independently
- — develop the skill to analyze and apply critical thinking to social problems
- — concern himself with the welfare of others
- — relate to the esthetic factors in his environment

The degree to which students:

- — are involved with professionals, laymen, and institutions in educational and social planning
- — use democratic processes to effect meaningful change
- — achieve in the area of verbal, written and nonverbal communication
- — plan curriculum with teachers
- — influence State Education Department programs
- — increase the depth and breadth of learning through using a variety of new media
- — develop vocational interests in the humanities and arts

CONCLUSION

John W. Gardner has written, " We can make great progress in improving the functioning of our society and still not have anything that will live or last unless we concern ourselves with the *values* that underlie the enterprise. If a society believes in nothing, if it does not generate in its members a sense of moral purpose, there is no possibility that it can develop the high level of motivation essential to renewal."

We believe that the time has come to strengthen support of the humanities and arts in education. We call upon the Governor, members of the Legislature, and the people of New York State to join in this commitment.

APPENDIX

THE STATEWIDE NETWORK OF MODEL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

This program would establish a system of experimental schools to demonstrate methods of redesigning the educational program in the humanities and arts in urban, suburban, and rural areas for the 1970's. The model schools will involve educators, students, laymen, and representatives of business, industry, and other community groups in planning and carrying out the redesign of educational goals and programs.

Concentrated planning and program design will take place during the summer of 1970. During the subsequent development of the program, continuous inservice education for the staff, students, and lay leaders will focus on:

- New materials and tools of learning, including computerized systems for individualized instruction
- New methods of teaching through group planning and design of program
- Cooperation with private business, industry, foundations, and cultural institutions

Instructional materials will be (1) drawn together from many sources, and (2) developed by students and teachers to deal with man's role in the solution of major social, environmental, and human problems in a multiethnic world. The development of attitudes and values which are needed to cope effectively with the times will be at the heart of the program.

The program will have blocks of time in the school schedule for the following:

- Large group orientation on the themes to be explored, presented by cross discipline teaching teams, students, and laymen involved in the restructuring of the program
- Small groups which will design their patterns of study and explore a variety of multimedia materials to use in their search for information, with teachers and students as consultants
- Individual pursuit of ideas and information

Education Department task forces, cutting across subject matter lines, will be organized to help with the development of programs and the provision of resource materials and to disseminate successful practices throughout the State.

Both the Department and each demonstration school district will work on the design of evaluation instruments that will assess changes in student behavior such as in the following areas:

- Independent search for information
- Relationships with students, staff, and laymen
- Critical thinking and decision-making as applied to social and environmental problems
- Values and attitudes related to constructive action
- Increased motivation and improvement in reading, writing, and expressing ideas
- Aesthetics as applied to leisure time and the improvement of the environment
- Use of democratic processes to effort measurable change
- Increase in depth and breadth of learning through use of a variety of media

Characteristics of the Humanities and Arts Program, K–12

Basic Positions

The focus of study is man, his survival and growth as a human individual.

The ultimate goal is the discovery of (1) a life worth living, and (2) ways to form a society which will make that life possible.

The organization of studies is interdisciplinary and built around concepts.

The learning experiences are drawn from humanistic insights, derived from the natural and social sciences, as well as from literature in all its forms and the other arts.

Central Focus

Knowledge and experience are integrated to build understanding of the total concept under study.

Learning situations are created in which free choices are made from among alternatives, after analysis.

Learning situations provide for both intellectual and "feeling" experiences.

Learning situations provide for students to culminate their choice-making in action.

Freedom of choice is exercised in the selection of communication media (visual, verbal, or aural) for student expression.

Practices

All students participate at all grade levels.

All disciplines participate according to their relevancy to the concept under study.

Flexibility of scheduling and grouping is determined by individual student needs.

Analytic techniques are taught and used in the examination of concepts.

The school encompasses the larger community for human, institutional, and physical resources.

The topics for study are organized under:

Concepts, such as "work" and "courage"

Concept clusters, such as "factors of environment: esthetic, economic and ecological"

Generalizations, such as " The culture of a society affects how its environment is used."

Themes, such as " Technology and the Human Condition "

Issues or great ideas, such as " War and Conflict," " Cultural Democracy "

Questions such as " How does man create order? "

Free choice-making follows these steps in the process of valuing in which the student:

discovers the alternatives
analyzes the effects of each alternative
discusses effects with his peer group
chooses an alternative
publicly affirms his choice
incorporates it into his behavior

Examples

- A 4-year interdisciplinary program which focuses all humanistic studies on such themes as " The Changing Environment," " Man and Society," and " Systems of Belief " has been initiated in one secondary school. The main objective is the understanding of one's self and one's relationship to fellow humans in the establishment of humane values. The program is required of all students beginning in grade nine. State and local requirements for the areas of English, social studies, art, and music are met, and special insights are also derived from philosophy, sociology, and economics in the questions asked of the themes under consideration. The entire morning of each school day is given to the program which has flexible scheduling and flexible grouping. Teaching teams representing the disciplines integrate relevant content and methods of inquiry to the themes. A " classroom-without-walls " concept is used in which the larger community becomes the resource and work area for the students.
- Elementary schools are naturally receptive to many aspects of humanities education. The generalist teacher, with the aid of specialists, has traditionally integrated verbal, visual, and aural learning experiences. A new approach has been introduced by two schools, however, by expanding the curriculum to include the " process of valuing." This process views choice-making as a necessary skill in a complex society. Such choice-making recognizes the effects of sensory, intellectual and emotional factors. Choice-making situations require that the alternatives open to an individual in each instance be analyzed through insights provided by different disciplines and their special methods of inquiry. It also requires that the freely-made choice that results from analysis be acted upon through humanistic studies. These schools introduce several choice-making situations into each school day. The action created by each student in terms of his choice takes many forms such as visual, verbal, or aural.

- In one seventh-grade social studies class, teachers decided that many important issues are frequently omitted. Through concensus, they concentrated, with students, on environmental design. In observing the environment, they photographed the area, scrutinized buildings, traffic patterns, parks, and city institutions, with a view to how they work for people. They became members of the city's urban renewal planning groups. Students became aware of space, appearance of their community, problems of air pollution, traffic, conservation. They learned about environments that work well and look good. They will, as adults, be aware of what developers propose to do in their community and, also, how to handle bond issues.

- The Department's Pilot Mid-Hudson Regional Festival of the Arts brings opera, ballet, theater and film performances to the schools of Sullivan County. Students and teachers are involved in study and activity to prepare for performances and for direct contact with the artists. Many of the youngsters and, later, their families had their first opera experience through this program. The opera performance produced the first spontaneous standing ovation by students in the history of the Monticello schools. During the Festival period, where artists were in residence and performing, daily attendance figures rose from about 92 percent to almost 100 percent in the schools of the county. Attendance remained at an unusually high rate after the performers had departed when followup activities took place. A resource (performing artist-teacher) person was requested and provided for the second year. The project coordinator was invited to attend regular meetings of area chief school officers to insure liaison with the programs. Teachers volunteered to attend Saturday preparatory sessions.

- A Coordinated Fine Arts Program in a rural setting operating on a Title III grant was begun in July 1968, in the Livingston-Steuben-Wyoming BOCES district. The 13 school districts of the area and the State University College at Geneseo joined staff and facilities to provide special experiences in music, art, dance, and drama for elementary, secondary, and college students. High school students performed in "MacBeth," held seminars with college students and faculty in English. Secondary students participated in fine arts experiences on a weekly basis at the college. String music instruction and ensemble experiences were provided for elementary and secondary students, and innovative dance experiences were offered to primary youngsters. Inservice programs were established in each area for teachers. The program had tremendous impact on the teachers as well as on the youngsters. Most unique aspect of this program, which is continuing, is the growing interstaff relationships which unite area public school teachers, college faculty, and artists into planning and operational teams.

- Last year, the Commack, Long Island, schools arranged to bring the Repertory Theater Touring Company from Lincoln Center into the community for an 8-week inresidence period. During this time, students and faculty from both high schools were intimately

involved in the company's process of preparing a theatrical vehicle for professional production. In addition, the actors were assigned to various teachers to contribute their talents to the learning environment in classes of all kinds. The high motivation created among the students was reflected in the rise in daily attendance at both schools from about 94 percent to nearly 99 percent during this period. The faculty developed a team-planning approach to increase opportunities of utilizing these auxiliary forces in instruction. The success of the experience as a contributory factor in the total school program is revealed in the decision of the administration to bring the Skidmore Dance Group into the same schools for a 10-day resident program just two months later; to carry on lecture demonstrations, performances, teacher workshops, and master student classes. The program was expanded this year.